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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Identical letters dated 7 June 2016 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Observer Mission of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

Yesterday, Muslims worldwide, including Palestinian Muslims in Occupied Palestine, including East Jerusalem, marked the first day of the holy month of Ramadan. This year, Ramadan began one day after Palestinians, Muslim and Christian alike, tragically marked the passage of 49 years since the onset of the Israeli military occupation of the Palestinian and Arab lands on 5 June 1967. This sombre anniversary, which comes just weeks after the observance of the sixty-eighth year since the *Al-Nakba* of 1948, is yet another painful reminder of the injustice imposed on the Palestinian people and the continued inability of the international community to fulfil its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, international law and relevant resolutions to bring an end to this illegitimate occupation, to justly resolve the question of Palestine in all its aspects and to ensure the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and freedom in their own independent State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, rights which they have for too long been denied.

Clearly, the failure to hold Israel, the occupying Power, accountable for its grave breaches of the law and ongoing brutal subjugation of the Palestinian people has protracted and exacerbated this conflict, with grave consequences to human lives and on the prospects for peace and stability. This is starkly reflected in the current situation on the ground in Occupied Palestine, including East Jerusalem, where Israel's illegal policies and practices continue to detrimentally affect every aspect of life for the Palestinian civilian population, which continues to endure, inter alia, death, injury, dispossession, displacement and countless other human rights abuses at the hands of a merciless occupying Power.

One manner in which Israel, the occupying Power, continues to exploit the international community's inaction is by continuing to systematically and deliberately colonize the Palestinian land it has belligerently, illegitimately occupied

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since June 1967, in grave breach of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, as well as international criminal law as articulated in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. On a daily basis, Israel confiscates Palestinian land, expands and constructs both settlements and its annexation, apartheid wall, demolishes Palestinian homes and other civilian structures, forcibly displaces and transfers Palestinian civilians and exploits the natural resources of the Palestinian land. Despite the widespread condemnations and calls for cessation, and the international consensus that the major obstacle and biggest threat to achieving the two-State solution for peace are settlements, Israel seems determined to continue with its expansionist agenda in direct contempt of the law and of the will and calls of the international community.

On 6 June, an announcement regarding illegal settlement construction came from the so-called "Israeli Jerusalem municipality", which declared its intent to build an illegal settlement comprising 15,000 settlement units in the Qalandiya area in the occupied West Bank, which is to be renamed "Atarot". In this regard, according to media outlets, the so-called "Israeli mayor of Jerusalem", who is also heading the illegal planning and construction committee, stated: "I intend to build a neighbourhood to meet the demands of the Haredi community. ... Such an intention has always been there. I am determined to make it come true."

Such preliminary announcements occur too often and are usually approved thereafter by the right-wing Israeli Government of Prime Minister Netanyahu, under which settlement-building and expansion have continued unabated. Here, it is important to recall the many Security Council resolutions directly addressing this crime, including resolutions 446 (1979), 452 (1979), 465 (1980) and 478 (1980). In the light of the current circumstances, we continue to call upon the Security Council to reaffirm this strong and well-established position on Israel's illegal settlement campaign. A firm message must be conveyed to Israel that its settlement activities and continued entrenchment of occupation and obstruction of a peaceful solution will not be tolerated and that it will be held accountable for such breaches. In the absence of such an unequivocal message, Israel will only continue its violations with absolute impunity, a fact starkly borne out by the evidence on the ground over the years.

At the same time, I must draw your attention to the continued killing and injury of Palestinian civilians by the occupying Power. Israeli occupying forces continue to commit extrajudicial executions against Palestinian civilians who they claim are carrying out a "stabbing attack". As with other recent killings of Palestinian civilians, independent and international investigations must be carried out to provide substantial proof that these so-called "stabbing attacks" against occupying forces, which are armed to the teeth with the most lethal weaponry, ever occurred in the first place. This narrative cannot be accepted without question as it is used over and over again to justify and pardon the excessive force and acts of extrajudicial executions against the Palestinian people held captive by this cruel and violent occupation.

The latest Palestinian to be accused of a so-called "stabbing attack" was a young woman, Ansar Husam Harsha (age 25) from Qaffin town near the West Bank city of Tulkarm. On 2 June 2016, Israeli occupying forces opened fire on Ansar at the "Innab" checkpoint. Ansar was more than 10 feet away from the occupying forces when they shot her. After she was shot, Red Crescent medics rushed to the

scene to provide her with emergency medical attention, but the occupying forces, as in so many other instances, prevented help from reaching her. Tragically, Ansar, a wife and a mother of two small children, Hadeel (age 2) and Yamen (age 4), died from her wounds.

In addition, on 6 June, a Palestinian young person, Jamal Mohammed Dweikat (age 20), died after succumbing to critical wounds sustained on Friday, 3 June. Jamal was shot with live fire in the head by occupying forces when clashes broke out in Nablus in the West Bank after a group of some 4,000 right-wing Israelis, including Knesset members from right-wing parties and illegal settlement leaders, raided the eastern side of the city escorted by occupying forces, reportedly arriving after midnight and leaving at dawn Saturday morning. In addition to the death of Jamal, at least 10 Palestinians were reportedly wounded in the clashes, in which occupying forces used live fire along with tear gas canisters and rubber-coated steel bullets against Palestinian civilians.

Furthermore, in this regard, I wish to draw attention to just some of the hundreds of other crimes perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, in the period since our last letter to you:

18 May 2016

- Israeli occupying forces detained 19 Palestinians, including ex-minister Wasfi Qabaha (age 52), three children and two former detainees, and summoned five others during predawn raids across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
- A Palestinian was shot and moderately injured by occupying forces near the Al-Shuja'iyya neighbourhood, east of Gaza City.
- Occupying forces demolished a Palestinian-owned home in the town of Shuafat, on the outskirts of East Jerusalem, in connection with plans to link two illegal Israeli settlements.
- Israeli settlers attacked and severely assaulted a Palestinian child, Rami Abu Aisheh (age 16), near his home in the Tel Al-Rumaideh neighborhood of Al Khalil. After they were finished beating him up, occupying forces detained him for attempting to defend himself from the settlers' attack.
- Occupying forces issued notices for removal of four water tanks used for gathering rain-water in the town of Beit Ummar in Al Khalil, under the pretext of being present in the so-called "Area C" of the West Bank.

19 May 2016

- Israeli occupying forces detained six Palestinians, mostly during predawn raids across the West Bank.
- A Palestinian farmer was injured by Israeli ordnance when it exploded to the east of Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip.

21 May 2016

- Israeli occupying forces detained two Palestinian children, Mohammed Samih Ulayan (age 10) and Mustafa Abu Al-Hawa (age 12), as they were walking in Al-Tur, before transporting them to a nearby illegal Israeli settlement. They

were interrogated by occupying forces for over six hours without a guardian present.

- Occupying forces fired on Palestinian farmers, shepherds and fishermen in the southern Gaza Strip.

22 May 2016

- Occupying forces detained at least five Palestinians from Ramallah and Al Khalil during predawn raids.
- Israeli settler bulldozers continued to level agricultural lands in Nablus and Salfit.
- Occupying naval forces fired on Palestinian fishermen, detained 10 fishermen and seized five boats in a separate incident in the northern Gaza Strip.

23 May 2016

- A Palestinian girl, Sawsan Ali Daoud Mansour (age 17) was shot and killed by Israeli occupying forces near the illegal Ras Biddu checkpoint, north of East Jerusalem.
- Occupying forces detained at least 25 Palestinians in overnight and day raids across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
- Occupying forces demolished Al-Anbiya Mosque in the Al-Musrara neighborhood in East Jerusalem.

24 May 2016

- Israeli occupying forces confiscated water pipes belonging to Palestinians in Kherbet Al-Hadidiya, a village in the northern Jordan Valley.
- Occupying forces detained 11 Palestinians, mostly minors, in predawn raids in Ramallah and Al Khalil.
- Occupying forces demolished the foundations of a privately owned Palestinian house in the Al-Thahra neighborhood in the town of Al-Issawiya in East Jerusalem, razed the land and knocked down its surrounding wall, in addition to several structures present on the land.

25 May 2016

- Israeli occupying forces fired at Palestinian farmers and shepherds in the southern Gaza Strip.
- Occupying forces carried out multiple raids overnight across the occupied West Bank, detaining at least 22 Palestinians.
- Occupying forces extended the detention of Mohammed Ismail Hushiyeh (age 12) for a year.

26 May 2016

- Israeli occupying forces issued demolition notices for three houses, an agricultural structure and a power line south of Nablus.

- Occupying forces detained 11 Palestinians in the West Bank, including two teenage girls from Al Khalil.

27 May 2016

- Israeli occupying forces detained a Palestinian man, Mahmoud Jumaa Saleh Hamed (age 52), two of whose children were already in Israeli jails, in the town of Silwad.

28 May 2016

- Israeli occupying forces forced Mohammed Younis Abu Tayeh from Ein Al-Lozeh, Silwan, East Jerusalem, to demolish an extension of his home (kitchen and bathroom), in order to avoid paying heavy fines, under the pretext of "construction without a permit".

29 May 2016

- Israeli occupying forces detained at least 10 Palestinians in overnight raids in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

30 May 2016

- Israeli occupying vehicles and bulldozers raided private Palestinian lands east of Khan Younis and levelled lands approximately 50 metres into Gaza.
- Occupying forces detained at least 28 Palestinians in predawn military raids in the West Bank.

31 May 2016

- Occupying forces detained 14 Palestinians in multiple predawn raids across the West Bank.
- Israeli naval boats opened machine gunfire on Palestinian farmers offshore Gaza City.
- Illegal Israeli settlers resumed their provocative tours into the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in East Jerusalem.
- A Palestinian fisherman was injured and detained along with four others by Israeli naval occupying forces that attacked them off the coast of Gaza.

1 June 2016

- Israeli occupying forces detained 27 Palestinians across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
- Occupying tanks and bulldozers went nearly 150 metres into Palestinian agricultural land to the east of Deir al-Balah, where they proceeded to raze the land, while randomly firing live ammunition.

2 June 2016

- Israeli occupying forces detained at least 13 Palestinians during raids across the West Bank.

- Occupying forces shot and killed a Palestinian woman, Ansar Husam Harsha (age 25), at the illegal "Innab" checkpoint, east of Tulkarem.
- Israeli military bulldozers entered and razed lands in the Al-Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza.
- Occupying forces issued administrative detention orders against nine Palestinians and renewed orders against 30 Palestinian detainees.

4 June 2016

- Israeli occupying forces opened heavy machine gunfire on Palestinian farmers and shepherds to the east of Khan Younis in Gaza.

5 June 2016

- Israeli naval boats attacked the boats of Palestinian fishermen with heavy machine gunfire, causing extensive damage to at least one boat.
- Extremist Israeli settlers attempted to set fire to a Palestinian-owned store in the Old City neighbourhood in East Jerusalem.
- Occupying forces detained 18 Palestinians from across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

After 49 years of occupation, it is abhorrent and completely unfathomable that the Palestinian people continue to be occupied, oppressed and subjugated by this brutal occupying Power. We continue to call upon the international community, including the Security Council, to overcome its paralysis and not to remain silent any longer in the face of such egregious Israeli aggression and human rights violations against the defenceless Palestinian people. At the minimum, the Council must unequivocally demand that Israel, the occupying Power, immediately cease all of its violations against the Palestinian people and comply fully with its legal obligations under international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and the relevant United Nations resolutions. The Palestinian people have waited for decades for the international community to intervene on the side of justice in order to free them from this illegal foreign occupation and continue to appeal to the international community to act with conscience and without further delay.

In this regard, I wish to refer to the recent ministerial meeting convened on 3 June 2016 in Paris as a "Middle East peace initiative", under the auspices of the President of the French Republic. This meeting of international partners constituted an important step in reasserting the urgency of fully ending the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and justly resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of the relevant United Nations resolutions and with due regard for the importance of the implementation of the Arab Peace Initiative. The joint communiqué issued by the Ministers underscored, inter alia, their alarm that actions on the ground, particularly acts of violence and settlement activities, are imperilling the two-State solution and highlighted not only the roles of both parties but also the responsibilities of the international community to help to preserve the two-State solution and to tangibly advance the prospects for peace. On this solemn anniversary of the forty-ninth year of occupation, we appeal to the international community to act with urgency and the highest sense of responsibility and purpose to uphold their decades-long promises and commitments and their legal obligations

to bring this injustice and tragedy to an end. The Palestinian people can no longer be reasonably asked or expected to wait for their rights and freedom; justice and peace cannot be delayed. Let this be the year that they are finally realized.

This letter is in follow-up to our 586 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 16 May 2016 (A/ES-10/722-S/2016/450), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Feda Abdelhady-Nasser
Chargé d'affaires a.i.